

Internal bylaws of the Association of Resources for Biophysical Research in Europe – ARBRE

Adopted by the General Assembly of 25/05/2022

Article 1. *Aims and Scopes / Objectives*

The Association of Resources for Biophysical Research in Europe, whose acronym is ARBRE, is founded to seed a large-scale interdisciplinary synergistic cluster, bringing together different approaches such as spectroscopic, hydrodynamic, real-time microfluidic, thermodynamic and single-molecule technologies.

This research field can be summarized as molecular-scale Biophysics. It is a dynamic and ever-expanding interdisciplinary field that aims to study biological macromolecules and assemblies as a whole, at an intermediate level between atomic-resolution structural descriptions and cellular-level observations.

ARBRE aims at building an optimal environment for the development of innovative integrative biophysical approaches, at the level of data acquisition, analysis and modeling.

Among ARBRE's scopes are:

- to build a molecular-scale biophysics European infrastructure, aiming to facilitate the transnational access to instrumentation and expertise for a wide user community
- to disseminate and exchange knowledge and expertise, notably through the organization and support of training activities, and through participation in Science outreach activities and liaison with other Associations
- to organize benchmarking studies and establish Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) as well as Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) in order to improve data quality and reproducibility
- to establish contacts with instrument developers, allowing to define and develop together future instrumentation
- to create an ideal environment to enable member technological core facilities to engage actively into methodological research, far beyond their traditional role as support structures
- to enhance the networking of the members to deepen the knowledge of crucial biological phenomena and to overcome significant biomedical challenges
- to contribute to the development of novel methodologies and technologies, by improving and pushing existing biophysical instrumentation beyond state-of-the-art

ARBRE's logos are the following





The logos may be slightly adapted to specific needs in agreement with the management committee.

Article 2. Membership

2.1 Subscription

A person aiming to join ARBRE has to fill in an application form in two steps for admission via ARBRE's website.

The MC/BoD decides about admission. Rejection requires no justification. Upon admission active and associate members pay an annual fee for full subscription (see 2.3).

2.2 Termination

A member can terminate membership at the end of the fiscal year by sending an email to the BoD and MC with one month's notice of termination.

A member can be excluded from the Association in case of a serious offence. The offender has to be invited by the BoD to give explanations either in person or in writing and the BoD decides about the eviction. Serious offences are

- serious violations of the Statutes
- serious violations of the scope, aims, and interests of ARBRE
- misappropriation of funds belonging to the Association

2.3 Annual fees

Subscription relies on paying an annual fee, which can be changed by the GA.

Ordinary Members: 40 Euro (25 € in 2022)

Early career Members: 20 Euro (15 € in 2022)

Associate Members: 100 Euro (50 € in 2022)

Honorary Members are exempted from the annual fee.

Article 3. General Assembly

3.1 Ordinary GA

The GA takes place once a year and is convoked by the BoD. Members are invited to the GA by the Secretary at least 15 days before the fixed date. The invitation includes date, time, location, and the agenda. Any member can propose additional agenda items until 7 calendar days before the meeting.

The GA is chaired by the incumbent President or, if not available, by the incumbent Vice President. The Secretary takes the minutes, which have to be signed by the chair and the

Secretary and must be kept for at least 5 years. (*alternatively: before any other business is transacted the GA elects a chairman and a minute keeper for the current GA*)

The minutes contain at least the following items:

- date and time of the GA
- names of the chairman and the minute keeper
- number of present or represented members
- all voting results
- (central statements of contributions to the discussion)

Items of urgency, i.e. items not included in the agenda, can be admitted at a GA only if a 2/3 majority of present members agrees. Requests to dismiss the President, the BoD or the MC, to change the Statutes, to deliberate on real estate items, or to dissolve the Association cannot be items of urgency and require the convocation of an extraordinary GA.

The GA reaches its quorum if 50%+1 of the Active and Honorary Members are either present (in person or virtually) or represented by a proxy. A proxy can have a maximum of 2 mandates.

Tasks of the GA:

- fixes the amount of annual membership fees for each category of members;
- elects, recalls and discharges the MC;
- elects, recalls and discharges the President;
- chooses an election committee to supervise the election of the MC and the President;
- approves by voting the annual reports presented by the MC, BoD, President and Treasurer.
- decides on the budget plan
- decides on future activities
- elects an official representative for the bank among the members residing in France, in case the Treasurer does not reside in France

In case of elections, the GA elects an election committee composed of one election official and two scrutineers. Members of the election committee must not be members of the MC in charge at the time of elections. The tasks of the election official are:

- discharge of the President and the BoD members
- discharge of the MC
- assessment of the number of eligible voters
- verification of the compliancy of all candidates with statutory requirements
- lawful conduction of the election of the President and the MC

The election committee members supervise the election.

The GA is not public, but the BoD may allow/invite guests. Applications for the allowance of guests can be sent to the BoD until 7 calendar days before the meeting.

3.2 Extraordinary GA:

An extraordinary GA must be convoked in order to

- change the Statutes
- vote off the President, members of the BoD and/or members the MC
- deliberate on real estate items
- dissolve the Association

An extraordinary GA can be convoked by either the President or upon written request of 25% of the active members to the BoD. In general, an extraordinary GA follows the same rules as an ordinary GA except for:

- no items of urgency can be added to the agenda during the GA

- a 2/3 majority of the members present or represented is required to approve all decisions
- if the reason for the extraordinary GA is dismissing the President, BoD's members, and /or MC's members, a chairman leading the extraordinary GA has to be elected at the beginning. The chairman must not be a member of the MC/BoD.

Article 4. Management Committee

The MC manages the Association. It consists of 9-20 members, elected individually for a period of 3 years. The members can be selected for a max of 2 consecutive mandates. Upon election the President becomes member of the MC.

In case of necessity, the MC can select an association member to replace the missing MC member(s) until the next GA. The provisional MC member(s) will terminate their mandate at the time of the closest GA.

The MC has the following tasks:

- preparation of the budget
- monitoring of the execution of the budget
- modification of the internal subdivisions of the budget up to 20%
- preparation of future activities
- implementation of the decisions taken at the GA
- implementation of the activities voted at the GA
- cooperation with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities
- establishing advisory committees and working groups
- raising funds, inviting and receiving contributions (this shall not be a permanent trading activity)

The MC can delegate one or more duties for a given time to one of its members.

If necessary the MC can reach decisions by e-voting or email outside an MC meeting. As in MC meetings all decisions are taken by simple majority; in case of draw, the decision is rejected.

Article 5. Board of Directors

The BoD is composed of

- 1) One President
- 2) One Vice President
- 3) One Secretary and, optionally, one deputy secretary
- 4) One Treasurer and, optionally, one deputy Treasurer

None of the positions can be combined. Thus, the BoD has 4 to 6 members

The BoD can delegate one or more duties for a given time to one of its members.

General Tasks of the BoD:

- management of the Association on a daily basis
- admission of new members
- preparation of the GAs
- reporting on the general situation and the activities of the Association at the Ordinary GA

The President

- is elected by secret vote at the GA for a period of 3 years
- is elected for a max of two consecutive mandates
- is the legal representative of the Association
- chairs all meetings of the MC, BoD and GA (if not stated otherwise)
- can sign cheques
- can sign contracts (ex. with sponsors, with locations for meetings, caterers, etc).

The Vice President

- is elected among the MC members by secret vote at an MC meeting
- is elected for a max of two consecutive mandates of 3 years each
- substitutes the President with all rights and obligations if the President is not available

The Secretary/The deputy Secretary

- is elected among the MC members by secret vote at an MC meeting
- is elected for a max of two consecutive mandates of 3 years each
- keeps the minutes at all BoD and MC meetings as well as the GAs
- sends the invitation for all BoD and MC meetings as well as the GAs
- the deputy Secretary helps the Secretary and substitutes him/her if the Secretary is not available

The Treasurer / The deputy Treasurer

- is elected among the MC members by secret vote at an MC meeting
- is elected for a max of two consecutive mandates of 3 years each
- is the legal representative of the Association
- keeps the bank account of the Association
- is responsible for all financial aspects of the Association
- reports on all financial aspects and on the annual accounting at the GA
- the deputy Treasurer helps the Treasurer in these tasks and substitutes him/her if the Treasurer is not available
- can sign cheques

Article 6. Working groups & Specific Activities

- List:

- WG on training and scientific meetings;
- WG BST (on Benchmarking, SOP and Technology awareness);
- WG “membership & communication”

- constitution:

Each WG needs to consist at least of 5 members, with a chair and a co-chair. The chair and co-chair are elected by WG members. They can be dismissed the same way or resign at any time. The working group chair can designate certain members to head subgroups, if reasonable, within the specific WG tasks. Tasks of the chair/co-chair include: sending invitations to WG meetings and chairing them, updating the member list.

- membership:

Every ARBRE member can become a member of multiple WGs. Non-ARBRE members (e.g. not registered company representatives) cannot become WG members, but can participate in specific WG activities if in the interest of the WG. The membership in a WG can be terminated by official announcement of the member to the WG chair, termination of ARBRE membership or after one year of inactivity (no participation in WG activities, repeated failure to answer to email communication). WG membership termination due to inactivity must first be discussed at a WG meeting. Money transfer for specific activities should involve the treasurer or deputy treasurer.

- specific duties:

WG on training and scientific meetings:

The WG aims to stimulate knowledge exchange and dissemination *via* the support and organization of advanced training activities and scientific meetings.

Activities (face to face, virtual or hybrid) can include, among others: workshops, lecture courses, practical courses, meetings, focus groups, webinars and on-line courses.

WG BST:

Benchmarking: This workgroup aims to plan, coordinate, raise funds for, execute and disseminate the results of benchmarking actions which could consist of:

- Instrument specific benchmarks
- Cross instrument benchmarking (e.g. protein – protein interactions, size characterization)

- Method benchmarking (e.g. comparing different protocols, software and data analysis and reference material)
- Kit benchmarking (e.g. comparing commercially available labelling kits, antibody-capture kits, and reference material)
- Multi-user instrument benchmark (e.g. follow-up of ITC benchmark)

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP): The workgroup aims to disseminate SOPs which are tried, tested in several (more than one) work environments and agreed on within the working group members. SOPs could consist of:

- Method SOPs regarding the usage of a certain technique
- Instrument-specific SOPs or variants thereof with regards to the different instrumentation
- General SOPs regarding to a particular sample property (e.g. size measurements, no matter which technique is used)
- Target-oriented SOPs focused on specific type of samples (e.g. membrane proteins characterization, polysaccharide characterization)

Technology awareness: The workgroup aims to inquire about and disseminate recent advances in technology and methodology development. This could consist of:

- Regular contacts with established and novel instrument developers (e.g. at conferences, from subscribed news feeds)
- Implement collaborations / demonstrations for instruments that are being developed
- Organise instrument placements and demonstrations in laboratories for feedback on instrument shaping, new applications, etc
- Collaborations with instrument manufacturers for new developments/methodologies on established instrumentation
- Setting up a database comprising instrumentation and methods (established / new / to be developed) including important references (literature, websites, SOPs, ...) and manufacturer contacts (both publicly available and internal)

WG “Membership & Communication”

The working group manages all communication- and membership-related aspects.

Some specific WG tasks include:

- administration of the member databases
- administration of the mailing lists
- dissemination of outputs generated by ARBRE’s activities (both public and internal)
- maintenance of the website
- Website analytics
- maintenance of the social media accounts
- preparation and dissemination of a regular newsletter

Article 7. Financial allowances

ARBRE is a non-profit association, whose core budget is mainly constituted by the membership fees. However the WG activities can be funded by specific registration fees and can resume to fundraising and sponsorship in order to be solvent to the creditors.

ARBRE’s bank account is deposited at: CIC - Crédit Industriel et Commercial; 38 rue Boucicaut - 92260 Fontenay-aux-Roses; IBAN FR 76 30066 10890 000203 1250194; BIC: CMCIFRPP

The treasurer and deputy treasurer duties are those stated in art. 5; they are also depositary of the bank codes for internet banking.

7.1 Reimbursement of personal expenses

Whenever an ordinary, early career or honorary member is officially representing ARBRE at a specific event (meeting, training school, workshop, symposium), some personal expenses are allowable to be reimbursed, after MC approval and based on original receipts.

The eligible expenses may include travel, subsistence, accommodation and registration fees.

Article 8. *Communication and outreach*

All communication-related aspects are managed by the WG Membership & Communication (see Article 6). Outcomes of the WGs will be made publicly available.

One of the preferred platforms for discussion, dissemination and membership is the proprietary website: <https://arbre-biophysics.eu>. The costs for running the website are included in the annual budget.

ARBRE is also present on social media, e.g.

- Twitter (@ARBRE-Biophysics)
- LinkedIn (ARBRE-Biophysics)

Article 9. *Compliance to General Data Protection Regulation*

ARBRE follows and complies to the EU GDPR n° 2016/679 of 27 April 2016.

The Membership database will contain the following personal data: Name, date of birth, nationality, mailing and electronic address.

All the data are used only for the internal scope of the Association (membership status, internal communication, activities and jobs advertisements), they will not be disclosed to third parties at any given time, they will not be used for purposes other than those explicitly stated above, they will be kept only until the membership is valid and will be destroyed as soon as any termination occurred.

Article 10. *Modification of the bylaws*

The present internal bylaws can be modified by an ordinary GA after discussion and by the majority of the votes either in presence or by proxy.

Done in Villeurbanne, on May 25th 2022

Signature of the BoD